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AMENDMENT TO THE SPECIFICATION

On page 1, lines 10-16, please amend the paragraph as shown below:

This application is a divisional application of U.S. Patent application no. 09/760,500, filed January 12, 2001 (now U.S. Patent No. 6,767,702) which claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional application no. 60/176,409, filed January 13, 2000 and is a continuation-in-part of U.S. Patent application no. 09/603,830, filed June 26, 2000 (now U.S. Patent No. 6,506,564) which claims the benefit of U.S. provisional application no. 60/200,161, filed April 26, 2000 and is a continuation-in-part of pending U.S. Patent application number No. 09/344,667, filed June 25, 1999 (now U.S. Patent no. 6,361,944), which was a continuation-in-part of pending U.S. Patent application number no. 09/240,755, filed January 29, 1999 (~~abandoned~~), which was a continuation-in-part of pending PCT application PCT/US97/12783, which was filed July 21, 1997 and claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional no. 60/031,809, filed July 29, 1996, which are incorporated by reference. ~~Benefit of provisional applications nos. 60/031,809, filed July 29, 1996; 60/200,161, filed April 26, 2000; 60/176,409, filed January 13, 2000 is also claimed, the disclosures are incorporated by reference.~~

Please amend the paragraph in the specification at page 157, line 25 to page 158, line 7, as follows:

Solid DTT was added to 600 uL solutions of the different types of thiol- or disulfide DNA modified 30 nm gold nanoparticle colloids until the DTT concentration was 0.017M. As DTT displaces the oligonucleotides, the color of the colloid turns from red to blue. UV/VIS spectra were taken as a function of time. The absorbance at ~528nm associated with dispersed 30nm gold particles began to decrease and a broad band at 700nm began to grow. The band at 700 nm is associated with colloid aggregation. ~~As shown in Figure 48, single~~ Single thiol oligonucleotide (1)-modified 30 nm gold particles quickly form an aggregate in 0.017M DTT; after 1.5 hours, the colloid totally turns blue. The solution containing disulfide oligonucleotide (4)-modified nanoparticles turns blue after 20 hours under identical conditions. For the trithiol-oligonucleotide (cleaved 6) modified nanoparticles, it took 40 h to turn the solution blue.